

The Converted Sinner :
OR, AN
A C C O U N T
Of the wonderful Mercy of God recalling
James Woofflencraft,

With Seven of his Companions, who had for many Years led a most Prophane and Un-godly course of Life : And of their Behaviour since.

Together with a
S E R M O N
Preach'd upon that occasion at
St. James Clerkenwell.

By the Reverend D. P E A D, Chaplain to His Grace the Duke of Newcastle.

L O N D O N,

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THE CANTERBURY TALES



ROYAL
SOCIETY
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THE *True Relation of James Wooffencroft.*

THE gracious Lord hath so ordered all his Works, that they ought to be had in remembrance ; the Wisdom, Power, and Goodness visible therein lead us unto God, not only to the Acknowledgment, but to the Fear, Love, and Obedience of Him : His Works that he hath done, and daily doth for us the Children of Men, were they observ'd, weigh'd, and meditated on as they deserve, would tend greatly to reconcile the worst of us to God, and incline our Hearts to his Statutes : And therefore the Spirit of God has given it as the proper Character of wicked and ungodly Men, and the occasion that they are such, That *they regard not the Works of the Lord, neither consider the operation of his hands.* Tho' the wickedness of Man is so great, that he now presumes by his Wit and Confidence to drive God out of the World, yet God is so patient as daily to present us with fresh Instances both of his Being, Omnipotence, Justice, and Mercy.

Christian Reader, That which at present is here commended to thy Consideration is a special Work of Grace, which if attended as it ought, and laid to Heart, as it deserves, will discover the goodness of God, how loath he is that Sinners should perish, and how willing and desirous that even the greatest should come to the knowledge of him and be saved : And all that are Christians indeed have cause to rejoice, that the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ hath been lately so magnify'd among us, as I shall endeavour to shew in the following Relation.

James Wooffencraft born of mean Parents, his Father being a Day-labourer at Manchester in Lancashire, was brought up to

Town An. 1694. and put Apprentice to Mr. George Gibbs of St. James Clerkenwell, who dealt in Rags, buying them of poor People and uttering them again to Farmers and Paper-Makers. This James came to Town so ignorant and illiterate that he could neither Write nor Read ; he served out his Apprenticeship, which ended the 9th of May last : But early in his Apprenticeship he had, through wicked Acquaintance, and the frequency of vicious Examples, soon cast off all fear of God, and gave the sway to his Lusts, suffering the Devil to lead him about at pleasure, into all manner of Wickedness ; as, Drunkenness, Lewdness, Cursing, Swearing, and Blaspheming ; in every particular whereof he proceeded so far as he scarce had an equal, to be sure no superior. The Enemy of all Goodness, the devouring Lyon, having got him so far within his reach, to prevent the fear of a rescue, by degrees set the Heart of this Young-Man against all those means as might be helpful to his Deliverance. This was discovered first, in the bad Company he chose and delighted in ; he show'd himself uneasy where the liberty of speaking and acting according to the corruption of his Heart was in the least interupted ; and wholly delighted in those that Curs'd and Swore without cause, that Drank without measure, and committed Leudness without shame ; but for such as made any show of Religion, or discover'd the least of Morality, he could not endure their Company ; for as he accounted them no better than Mad or Fools, who lived not like himself, so he could not brook their Reprof. The next Instance how much he was bent against what might reclaim him was, in rejecting the good Advice, slighting the Chiding, and showing himself stubborn and altogether unamended by his Master's Correction : And farther, he harden'd his Heart against the Counsel, Entreaties and Tears of his Aged Mother; of whom, for all this Tenderness, Care, and Concern, (as he has since with Sorrow confess'd to me and others) he made a meer Laughing-stock, giving her hard words, for her Religious Counsel. And least the time should come, that he who was thus ensnared by the Wiles o

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Satan should escape, the wicked one took great care to turn his Heart from the Church; for (as he hath with Grief and Lamentation confess'd) two Years last past he cannot remember that ever he set his Foot within a Church: And for three Years before that he went but very seldom; insomuch that when his Brother or other Acquaintance did prevail with him to go to the Church, yet when come thither, he had one fetch or another to excuse his going in, and did often draw away his Perswaders with him to walk and drink in the Fields: And he that worketh in the Hearts of the Children of Disobedience, having wrought so powerfully in his, he at last grew to that hardness of Heart, that fearedness of Conscience, that (as he confesses since) he did verily believe there was neither God nor Devil, Heaven nor Hell.

Thus may the Reader perceive the various steps by which poor Youth descends to the brink of the bottomless Pit; and how much are the Youth of our Age acquainted with, and conversant in such wicked Practises! nay, how greedily do they run after these ways, which, without extraordinary Grace, plunge them in everlasting destruction. But to return, though this poor Creature was so near, it pleased not God to suffer the Pit to shut her Mouth upon him; but on the 2d. of this Instant July, as this *James* was going to work about sorting Rags for his Master in a Store-House near *Hide-Park*, in the Company of Mr. *Aaron Gibbs*, his Master's Son, and one *Laurence Kibble*; in the way *James* espy'd two Women-kind, his wanton Eye soon set his lustful Heart on fire, insomuch that he openly declar'd his beastly Desires, and bemoan'd the want of opportunity to compleat them, for at this time the presence of his Young-Master debar'd him; and therefore, tho' sore against his will, he went on to his business; and when arriv'd at the place, his part was to hold up the Bag in which the Rags were crowded, (at this time instead of a Bag they made use of an old Net) which he let fall out of his Hand, his Young-Master chid him for his Negligence, and ask'd him, why he let go his hold, to whom *James* made no other answer but by crying out, *Lord have*

Lord have Mercy on me, I believe I am struck with Death; for he was suddenly taken with a violent Sicknes, insomuch that he grew wonderful pale, his Strength failed him, and he sweat strangely, yet at the same time quak'd and shiver'd at that rate, that when some of his Company had brought him some Liquor, which they hoped might chear and revive his Spirits, he was no way able to lift the Cup they gave him to his Head ; he spoke to some about him to desire his Master's leave to go home, for, as he said, he believ'd himself as certainly struck with Death as ever any Man was : His Master yielding to his Request he made home-wards, and having gone about an hundred Paces from the House he grew so faint he was not able to keep his Legs any longer, but was forced to sit down on the Ground ; where having late a while, he somewhat recover'd himself, got up and made forward about an hundred Paces more, when he fell down against a Bank, and wept, and cry'd out, saying, *Lord have Mercy upon my poor Soul, for I am not a fit Man to die at this time;* he mov'd from thence, went forward, and in a Field fell down again, where he lay for some time as one in a Trance ; the sence of Vivification being suspended for a while : during this time he declares there was represented to him, *A glorious place full of light and brightness,* where he saw Persons that look'd joyful and happy, with whom he would have joined himself, but was not permitted : Then was he led (as he apprehended) to a place on his left-hand, where he found a wonderful darkness ; and after that saw a most terrible and asto[n]ishing Fire, wherein he heard many Persons roaring, and condemning themselves for their Sins : Immediately he thought he saw a Company of Judges sitting (as he expresses it, just as they do at the Old-Bayly) he was called up before them and examined, and so the second time, and likewise the third, at which time he thought he saw and read the Catalogue of all the Sins that he had committed throughout his whole Life ; for which he was condemned to the Fire he had before seen : Hereupon (he saith) he cry'd out, *Lord, Lord, be merciful to me and spare me a little longer, that I may become a new Christian;* upon which he thought

one of those glorious Persons came and reprise'd him: Hereupon he comes to himself, but found himself still sick and faint. He scrambled up upon his Knees, and pray'd, *That the Lord would strengthen him that he might see his Brother before he dy'd.* Having pray'd, he got up, and coming to the sight of his Brother, who was at a Store-house near, spoke to him in this manner; *Oh dear Brother, I believe I am struck with death, and therefore desire to speak three or four words with you before I die, to see if I can make you sensible how great Sinners we both have been. Brother I am no Man for this World, repent of your Wickedness, for tho' you have not been so great a Sinner as my self, yet you have been a wonderful great Sinner. God knows whether I shall live till you come home, and therefore I long'd to see you, to pray you that you do not break the Sabbath, as you have been us'd to do, nor live that wicked Life you have liv'd. Oh! Brother, what Joy will there be in Heaven among the Angels that such a Sinner as I return.* Having discours'd his Brother to this purpose, he made the best of his way home, where he did not continue long sick, God having awaken'd his Conscience, chang'd and inclin'd his Will, was pleas'd to release him from it, and he is now as well as formerly, saving that he doth at sometimes Sweat more than ordinary, and always quake and tremble when he hears any Swear.

Some having heard this Account, may return upon me, *parturient mentes;* Is that which hath been talk'd of in City and Country, by all degrees of Persons, come to this? Is there no more in it? I answer, It may appear little to some, however, God by this little has effected great and wonderful Matters; for not only is this Man reclaim'd, staining from his former Leud Company, and Evil-doings, and behaving himself as one called and converted; but God has made that use of this little, that seven other, almost, if not altogether as vicious as himself, are check'd, startl'd, convinc'd, and I hope, converted: Their Names are *Samuel Wossencraft*, the Brother, *John Douglas*, *James Adams*, *Laurence Gibbel*, *Thomas Gier*, *Edward Mason*, and *James Fowler*; such of these as cannot read, have

have instead of spending their Money in Drunkenness, hired therewith a School-Master to learn and instruct them ; by whose help they frequently meet together to pray, read, and sing Psalms ; moreover, they admonish all their former Acquaintance (and such Strangers as they perceive need it to reform and amend their Lives ; they have enter'd themselves into a Religious Society , hoping that Conversation with such shall now have a greater Influence over them than ever Conversation with the Prophane and Irreligious had. I may add farther of this *James Woossencraft* ; It has been divers times observ'd that if any Swear he falls into a great Agony Sweating and Trembling strangely. The 17th. of this Instant July, a Farmer's Servant who came to Town for Rags, happen'd to Swear in the Hearing of this *James*, but no sooner had he recover'd from his Sweating and Trembling, than that he reprov'd him, and told him after this manner, *Friend, you look as if you were in Tears, and may be have sworn many times, I advise you to break off from this sinful way, for assuredly when you come to be sick, you will have every Oath you have sworn come to your remembrance.* This he spoke with such a feeling apprehension and sense, that his Advice wrought, and the rebuked Person promised amendment. In short, referring for farther Information in this matter to the Discourse hereunto annex'd, I dare vouch for the Man, he is too simple to forge a thing of this nature ; and I hope I may obtain that credit as to be thought that I know better than to seek the promoting Religion and Reformation by Lies and Stories ; but by what I have heard from, and perceive in the Man, I mean his gracious Words and Religious Endeavours, I do verily believe God hath begun a good work in him, and by him in his Companions, and by them in others.

Which good Work I beseech God in due time to prosper, and perfect, to the Converting more, and to the Glory of his great Name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Your Friend and Servant in the Truth,

D. P E A D.



The Sinner Converted:

A

Sermon on the happy Conversion of a young Man, &c.

EPHESIANS 2. 1.

And you hath he quickned who were dead in Trespasses and Sins.

TH E holy Scriptures are not barely accommodated to our interest, being sufficient to make us wise unto Salvation, but likewise to our delight, inasmuch as they afford us various instances of the Divine goodness and mercy : There we read a fair account of the Creatours Wisdom and love in upholding the universe, and providing for all his Creatures. There we read of His Immense power in restraining the spirit of ambitious Tyrants, and wonderfully preserving the innocent, who were appointed as Sheep to the Slaughter ; there we read the irresistible Authority of his word, who not only spake the word and the Waters were Created; but spake to the Ocean, hitherto shall thy proud Waves come and no farther, and by virtue of that word they return not to cover the Earth ; and in these holy Pages we also read the sweetness of his mercy and the miraculous efficacy of his grace, that takes up blind, mad, and resolute Sinners, in the height of their career, how though they be like the Horse and Mule fiery and Head strong, yet his grace can rein them in, not permitting them to run out their intended Course : And by this he convicts and converts unruly sinners, such as neither fear God nor regard Man ; and prepares them for Heaven, who with their utmost industry were fitting themselves for Hell.

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Of this sweetness of mercy in God, and of this power of his grace towards the Romans, the Apostle here sings Triumphant ly, and besides this of the Text, we find in sacred Record three other, as *Mary Magdalane* who was rescu'd and deliver'd, call'd and converted, sanctify'd and Sav'd, notwithstanding severall Devils had for sometime held her Heart in possession: The like wonder of grace we read in the conversion of *Saul*, who of Blasphemer, became an adorer of the name of Jesus; of a cruel and bloody Persecutor, he by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ became a powerful, laborious and zealous Preacher, and as ready as he had been to shed the Blood of Believers, he was afterwards more pleas'd to offer up his own selfe, and become a Martyr for the blessed Jesus.

And how are all gracious Hearts affected and delighted, nay even ravished with the mercy and goodness of God? and how doe they adore the power of his grace, when they contemplate the sudden, and the thorough, though late, conversion of the Thief on the Cross? this person had spent his whole life in the service of the Devil, yet in the very Article of his Death by grace became a Saint of God, from a Thief was converted unto a Martyr, and from the Gallows was translated to Paradise where he was an eye witness of that Rejoycing, with which the holy Angels celebreate the conversion of a Sinner.

When we read such passages of Scripture, what can we do less than extol the compassion and love of God to us the Children of Men? And humbly acknowledge that his ways are past our finding out, and the workings of his grace surpassing our understanding.

Blessed be God, we of this Parish (as we have the hard Hearts and ungracious lives of some to bewail) so we have the awakening, quicking, converting and raising of others to praise God for. And that I may excite you with me to magnify the name of the Lord; give me leave to tell you, he whose conversion we now glorify God for, had once like *Mary Magdalane* seven Devils, he was with *Saul* a Blasphemer and a

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of his persecutor, and in some respects as great a Theif as he that ex-
handed on the Cross : And yet where Sin once abounded, Gods
thrice hath abounded much more.

For any thing we know a Legion of Devils might have pos-
sess'd him, but these he confesses did.

1st A Drunken Devil, 2d a Lustful Devil, 3dly a Swearing
Cursing and Blaspheming Devil, and this held him in sub-
jection as a Master Devil; for tho this poor Wretch paid obe-
dience to others, yet most was to this. For I heard Him humbly
confess that he never Drank, but that as fast as he swallow'd
his Liquor, he belched up Oaths and Curses ; by which
meanes, the same minute he Sacrificed to the Devil of Drink.

He highly provoked the God of mercy to Damn and Con-
found him ; and that nothing pleased him better, than when
in open Streets he Swore, Curs'd and Band, so that as one un-
clean Devil over heated his Brain, the other overmasterd his
Tongue.

4. He was also under the power of a prophane Devil, to
whom he paid a full Tribute of Sabbath breaking : This was
one of his most pleasing Recreations, *viz.* to pollute the Lords
Day, and to slight and despise the ordinances of Christ, and
so faithful a Slave was he to this evil Spirit, that he was never
contented when he did singly mispend and prophane the Sab-
ath, unless he had prevail'd on others to Joyn with him in
his Transgression :

5. The next of his Masters, was an obstinate and a refrac-
tory Devil ; for as he confesses when his aged Mother besought
him with Tears, that he would not bring her hoary Head to the
Grave with sorrow, and when she with all imaginable
Mildness gave him counsel in order to Reclaim him, and
when she was back'd by other faithful Friends in this her pious
and charitable Design, then would he stretch all the Brains he
had to make may-Game of her and them ; he gave them leave
to say sometimes what they pleas'd, but was always resolv'd
and bent to doe after his own lust.

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6. He was under subjection to a scoffing; flouting Spirits which employ'd and assisted him in the deriding all manner Religion, and laughing out of countenance all Modesty and Sobriety.

7. He was Vassal also to a prodigal Spirit, who thought he might permit him to Labour and take Pains, yet would not consent that the produce thereof, should either be wisely laid out (or carefully Husbanded) but ordered all to be consumed in extravagant Drinking and Madnes :

Farther the Person of whom I am discoursing, did in Persecution and Blasphemy out do **Saul**: For he has declar'd, that he hath Blasphemed the holy name of Jesus innumerable times. And that he knew no other use to make of his Wounds than to tare them wider with his unhallowed Tongue, and to tread the most precious Blood of the Son of God under his most ungodly Feet, a bitter Persecutor he was exposing any for the bare appearance of Religion and Virtue, he cared not to enter the Kingdom of Heaven, and by his good will none else should.

And lastly we may truly say in many Respects, he was a notorious a Theif as he that Suffered on the Cross ; he was so to God, Robbing him as much as possibly he could of the service and glory which was due unto him ; he was a Thief to his own Soul likewise Stealing, and carrying that away from all means and opportunitys of Grace, and consequently Robbing and spoyleing it of all hopes of Life and Glory ; he was also devouring Theif to others, Stealing from them their Grace, Virtue, good Thoughts and Purposes, and especialy their precious Time.

Yet of this Person I can with great Joy and equal truth pronounce he hath obtained Mercy, and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ hath been exceedingly abundant towards him. For he hath quickned, and I hope will fully convert and Sanctify him that was thus dead and buryed in Trespasses and Sins.

An Angel was once sent to **Cornelius** 10 A&ts 3. 4. to acquaint him

Spirituall that his Prayers and Almes were come up for a Memori-
nnerial before God, and to direct him by sending for the Apostle
St. Peter to come to the full knowledge of Jesus Christ; though
it hath not pleased God to send one of those heavenly Embassa-
dours to assure us, that the devout Prayers and charitable con-
tributions of some well disposed Persons in this Parish are af-
fisched to him. Yet I conceive he has given a sufficient Proof
e conhereof, in that he hath remunerated our Labour of Love to poor
ignorant Children, by his late miraculous awakening, con-
vincing and converting some ignorant, loose and wicked Per-
sons among us: And we hence may gather great Encourage-
ment to continue and abound in works of this Nature, for as
much as we are thus happily assured, that our Labour shall
not be in vain in the Lord.

The words of the Text, Originally belong to the *Ephesians*,
and describe their case and condition, when the Apostle first
came among them, they were dark and blind in their under-
standing worshipping Idols, their Hearts were hardened
through the deceitfulness of Sin; and the wiles of Satan, they
were so addicted to gratify their corrupt desires, and thereby
waded into such enormous Crimes, that they were as Dead hav-
ing no more power to depart from their wicked ways and to
change their ungodly course of Life, than the dead Man has
to unloose his Grave Cloaths and free himself from his Sepul-
chre, they were not only blind in the commission of Sins, but
were stupify'd, and as Dead in their wicked ways, past all
hopes of Recovery by bare humane meanes.

He is naturally Dead whose Soul is separated from his Body,
these *Ephesians* were Spiritually Dead though they enjoy'd
a natural Life, in that their Souls were destitute of the grace of
God.

They were Dead with respect to their Reason also, inasmuch
as the Apostle, 1st Cor. 15 32, accounts it no injury to call them
the Beasts of *Ephesus*, they held such beastly Principles and
were guilty of such beastly practices, that the glory of Man
hood.

hood, their reason and understanding seem'd to be Dead and totally lost.

From the words we may collect these two Propositions.

1. Unconverted, unregenerate and habitual Sinners, who live without the grace and fear of God, indulging themselves in Trespasses and Sins, are no better than dead Persons.

2. That God is able when he pleases by his Grace and holy Spirit, to convert, regenerate and reclaim such dead Persons *You hath he quickned who were dead in Trespasses*, HE who raised Christ from the Dead, *Eph. 1. 20*, after that he had been Crucify'd, Dead and Buried, he hath quickned and raised you.

The former of these Propositions will serve to discover unto us the wretched State of fallen Men, the latter will illustrate the goodness of God and the power of his Grace, the first will direct us to Humility. The 2d to glorify God for his mercy to our selves and others, whom he shall please to call out of that wretched State.

1. That unconverted, unregenerate, and habitual Sinners, such as live without the grace and fear of God, indulging themselves in Trespasses and Sins, are no better than dead Persons.

Man lives a Life in common with the Beasts, this is the Life of sense. It is not in Relation to this Life, that I term the unregenerate and habitual Sinners dead, for it is visible and deplorable that they live persuing the same methods with the Beasts, gratifying their senses, and making provision for the Flesh, the desires and Appetites whereof wholly influence and command them.

Man also liveth a Life of reason; he had a Talent of reason bestow'd on him, whereby he was able to Judge and discern ^{more} between Good and Evil, what he ought to embrace, and what he ought to shun. Hereby he might have been directed to serve God and manage himself in all respects; but by the fall of *Adam* this noble faculty was both blinded and weaken'd, so that it neither discerneth what is best, nor is able to govern, and keep in due order the Passions and Appetites. But they

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and taking the advantage of dark and disabled Reason have ever
since dragg'd and hurried it about at Pleasure.

That natural and unregenerate Men, live not the Life of
Reason, that is, are not guided by the dictates and principles of
right Reason, is obvious to every nice observer of their Words
and Actions, by which a fair guess may be likewise made of
their thoughts, and there are seasons wherein they who are all
for Reason, discover none;

But there is a Sublimer kind of Life granted to Man, which
is called a Spiritual Life, or Life of Grace. As when he
walks with God, and lives to God, making the glory and hon-
our of God the ultimate end of his Thoughts, Words and
Actions, and to this way of living the unregenerate, the un-
converted and habitual Sinners, are such utter Strangers, that
they are rightly esteemed and taken for Dead.

We collect as much from our Saviours saying Mat. 8. 22,
Let the Dead bury their Dead, the dead in Sin bury the dead in
Nature: Ungodly prophanes and irreligious Persons are walking
Ghosts, their Bodys serving as Coffins to carry up and down
their dead Souls.

Christ is the life of the Soul, in whom therefore he liveth
not, there can be no Life, no Spiritual Life; upon this account
the Apostle judged of the Wanton Widdow that neglected her
elfe and her charge, that *she was dead while she lived* 1 Tim. 5. 6.
Heathens have not been altogether unaquainted with this
notion, witness. *Cum careat pura mente cadaver agit*; The Soul
is the Man, and when that is delighted in, and given up to all
manner of Uncleanness, the Man is dead; *Many may have a name*
to live, who notwithstanding are realy dead, Rev. 3. 1, they live
to the World but are dead to God, a Spiritual Lethargy or
Dead-Palsy has overspread them, they are dead also inasmuch
as they are obnoxious to Death. We reckon them dead in Law,
who have receiv'd sentence of Condemnation, notwithstanding
they are Repreiv'd for a few days.

But our assertion is farther true. That the unregenerate
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unconverted and habitual Sinners are dead, in as much as they are void of the Life of Grace, they have not the principles of Spiritual Life, Faith, Love and Obedience, and as soon shall a breathless Corps perform the office of natural Life, as such Persons (continuing in that State) discharge the duties which bespeak and become a Spiritual Person ; on the contrary all their works are by the Spirit of God accounted dead Works. Such as the works, such are the Workers, such as do dead Works are dead Persons, dead to God and his Grace.

We will for our farther Satisfaction here consider such Persons but in three respects : Their Thoughts, their Sense of Apprehension, and their Motion, these are indications of Life, if therefore we find them wanting in these Persons, we may safely conclude them void of Life.

1. As to their Thoughts, undoubtedly these unhappy Persons are so far dead that they have lost their faculty of Thinking ;

He that gave us being, and by whom we live, and move and are continued in that being, must be allowed to be the sole and proper object of our Thoughts, what ever else enters into our Minds must come in by way of Subordination to him ; and God himself declares Ps. 10. 4, that he has no place in the thoughts of wicked and unsanctify'd Persons ; so far from thinking of God as he ought is the unconverted Sinner, that his Heart thinketh, nay hopeth there is no God Ps. 14. 1. and if you will over-persuade him to acknowledge a Deity, yet he will not think the Deity sees or takes any notice of them, and our Apostle doth clear this, for speaking of these *Ephesians Eph. 2. 12* before their Conversion, he declares they were not only without Christ, but without God. And what Life can you suppose they have who studiously and diligently run from the Fountain of Life ?

That the Ox goes so gently and quietly to the Slaughter house no wonder, seeing God hath not given him the power of Thinking. And though God at first conceded this faculty to

the Man can you believe he retain it, if you find him playing at
the Hole of the Asp, rejoicing, merry-making in the Den of
the Cockrtrice, sleeping securely upon the top of a Mast, in the
highest storms of Divine Vengeance; Can you believe that God
is in their thoughts who can play with his Thunder-bolts? be
unconcern'd at his Threatnings? and make a mock at the Calls,
Entreaties, and Incitations of his Mercy? that can resolutely
violate his Laws? Prophane his Days? Ridicule his Gospel and
tread under Foot the most precious Blood of his only begotten
Son? it is against all sense and reason; it is not Charity but
Simplicity to think that Person thinks on God as a Judge who
causelessly and boldly at every Breath calls upon him to damn
and confound him? yet all these, and many more *Trespasses*
and Sins such Persons are guilty of; whence we must necessarily
conclude them not only to be degenerated into Beasts, but that
they are dead while they live, having cast away that indication
of Life, their thinking faculty.

2. It will farther appear, if we consider the same Persons as
to the use and exercise of their Senses.

Our Eyes were principally given us to look upwards, yet
the Eyes of obstinate Sinners are either roving or dejected;
our Ears to attend the Word of God, and gather Rules from
thence for the pious regulating our Conversation; yet the Ears
of such are generally choak'd and block'd up by worldly Cares
and Pleasures, and they cannot hear so as to understand and
be converted: As for feeling and apprehending either Good
or Evil, that Apostle hath observ'd, *Ephes. 4. 19.* they are past
it, time was, its possible, that their Consciences were tender and
soft, and did smite them for their evil Words and Doings, but
a continued custom in Sin hath harden'd and cauterized them
to that degree, that neither Preaching nor Praying, Misery nor
Mercy mollifies them, they are of such a dead and dedolent
Disposition, that if you apply the Fire of God's fierce Anger to
them they start not out of their wicked Courses, they feel no
more than a dead Man when you lay Coals to his Flesh; or if

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you proclaim the glad tidings of the Gospel, Mercy, Grace, and are Peace they work not on them. In short, these are so desperate who as wilfully to shut their Eyes, and close their Ears for fear they would should at any time hear or see the things which concern their present and future happiness; they triumph in doing Evil, and boast in the report thereof, their Foreheads have lesser sense of giving Modesty than those of common Strumpets; and they are so lost far from feeling and repenting, by the weight of Guilt, or the burthen of Punishment, that you may with as much ease change the Skin of the Leopard, or colour of a Negro, as reform them in the least of their evil Habits; their Reason is become a slave to their Passions, their Members Servants to Unrighteousness, and their Consciences Vassals to the Prince of Darkness. And how can we say less of such than that they are dead?

3. Unregenerate, unconverted, and habitual Sinners, are *dead in their Trespasses and Sins*, if you judge of them by their Motion.

The practice of Godly Persons, such as have the Life of Grace in their Souls, is to walk with God, so to move and act as they may best please and honour him, but the Feet and Ankle Bones of perverse and habitual Persons want strength for such Motion; they can go downwards in the way that leads to destruction, they make haste, none shall go before them in this broad and high Road; they will with *Ahimaaz* run though they be not fent; but on the contrary, the way to Life they fancy too strait, too narrow, they cannot think of keeping in it.

Nor do they only want strength in their Feet, but in their Hands also; the Sinews of these are strangely shrunk up and dry'd; so that they can neither lift themselves up to God in Prayer, nor stretch themselves forth to Man in Charity; it is true, they can and do too often put themselves forth to work wickedness; but if you put the Word of God, or any other good Book into them, as if they had the Palsie they shake and let it fall.

And although these Persons vainly boast that their Tongues are

nd are their own, yet how frequently do they discover the contrary,
ate when they cannot move them to the speaking of one good
ey Word ? it is true, the greater the shame, they can with pleasure
ein Lye, Curse, and Swear, tell an obscene Story, or sing a drunken
nd Song, yet they cannot pour forth a Prayer, or deliver a Thanks-
of giving, to such purposes their Tongues serve them not, but have
so lost all motion ; in such like things they are Tongue-ty'd, as
the mute as Fish, nay as dumb as the dead.

To go a step farther, and convince you, that the Persons I
am speaking of are dead in their Trespasses and Sins :

The dead are laid out of sight, and where do these live but
in the Land of Darkness, where all things are forgotten, their
guilty Consciences compel them to keep least in sight.

The Dead are laid in Graves and Sepulchers ; and that the
Souls of such Sinners are so laid as dead, any that come near the
open Sepulcher of their Throats must believe ; nay, that they
have been long dead by the noisom stanch that cometh thence.

The Dead have ponderous Stones laid upon their Graves and
Sepulchers ; and these Sinners have an intolerable weight of
Guilt lying upon their Consciences, which not all the Angels
of Heaven can rowl away.

The dead are in so deep a Sleep, that it is beyond the power
of Man to awaken and raise them to Life ; and in as deep a
sleep are unregenerate and habitual Sinners, whom nothing in-
ferior to the Divine Power of Christ can raise ; for it is he, and
he alone, that by His Grace and Holy Spirit quickneth such as
are dead in Trespasses and Sins.

And thus I proceed to discourse on our Second Proposition.

II. Proposition. *That God is able when he pleases, by his Grace
and Holy Spirit, to convert, regenerate, and reclaim such
dead Persons.*

To quicken is to revive, to give Life to what was formerly
dead ; and in the case under Consideration, it is to infuse

Grace and Spiritual Life into an unregenerate and unmortifi'd Soul.

In handling of this Point, my purpose is first to show, what this quickning is, and wherein it consists: *Secondly*, That God is the Author of it. *Thirdly*, The Method by which it is brought about. *Fourthly*, The Persons who are quickned; *The dead in Trespasses and Sin.*

I. What this quickning is.

Man, when he first came from the Hand of God, was an holy and righteous Creature, his Body was fitted with Members, and his Soul endowed with Qualities capable to know, serve, and enjoy God; but upon his transgressing the Command of God, he not only defac'd, but quite disfrob'd himself of this glorious Image, saving that some few Lines are remaining in his Soul, but miserably blur'd and impair'd, inasmuch as an universal Corruption hath invaded his whole Nature, his Understanding being dark and confus'd as to the apprehension of natural things, but quite blind as to Spiritual, according to that of our Apostle, *1 Cor. 2. 14.* *The natural Man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them because they are spiritually discern'd.* His Will is foward and perverse, and will not incline to its proper Interest, his Affections are sensual, disorderly, and ungovernable; and this corruption of our Nature is in Scripture termed the Flesh, the Old Man, and also the first Death, in that the Soul of Man having lost the Grace of God is dead, and must abide so till quicken'd again by God's Grace; and this is call'd the New Man, the New Creature, our Regeneration or begetting again, when we are begotten by the Word of God, when we are nourished by God's Ordinances, cloathed with his Grace, and sanctifi'd and tutor'd by the Holy Spirit, who heals our Corruptions, and infuses into our Souls new Principles of Life whereby we are converted unto our Creator, forsaking our Lusts, and drawing from the World and Satan, we cleave unto God by Faith, Love, and Obedience.

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2. The next to be consider'd, is the Author of this quickning; this converting of a Sinner to newness of Life: It is God, and God only: So it is also written, 1 Cor. 15. 44. *The first Man Adam was made a living Soul;* after God had framed his Body out of the Dust, he breathed into him a reasonable and immortal Soul, by which his Body was made alive, and moved. The last *Adam, Jesus Christ,* God and Man, was made a quickning Spirit, quickning by his Grace and Holy Spirit all his Members: The first was a Minister of Death, transmitting his Guilt, and the evil consequences thereof to his Posterity. The second a Prince of Life, purchasing by the Merits of his Obedience and Sufferings, Grace for the raising and quickning those that the first had kill'd. That nothing inferior to the Divine Power can raise such as are *dead in Trespasses and Sins* is made manifest by Scripture and Experience.

It is God that taketh away the Heart of Stone, and giveth a new Heart of Flesh, Ezek. 11. 19. 2 Cor. 5. 17. It is by Christ the Son of God, by his Grace and Spirit that we are recreated and made new Creatures, that all old things are done away, and all things become new in us. It was a Divine Power that created Man at first, seeing he was created in the Image of God, and no other can remake, and stamp that Image upon him.

To open the Eyes of the Blind, to soften Hearts harder than the nether Millstone, to deliver Souls out of the strong Man's hand, to open the Prison-doors, and set the Captives free, to awaken and quicken them to his Service who were in a dead of Sleep, is a Work only fit for God, and where-ever we see it wrought we must acknowledge the Finger of God.

And as God alone can thus see that Man may walk humbly with his God, it is convenient that he know, God doth this great work of quickning such as are dead in *Trespasses and Sins* of his meer free Grace, there is not the least Merit or Desert in us. This merciful and gracious Visitation proceedeth solely from God's everlasting Love, who as our Apostle, Eph. 1. 4. declarereth, *bath chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the World,*

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World, that we should be holy and without blame before him. 'Tis true, this Love is not made known to the Elect but at their Conversion, however it began from all Eternity ; when we were polluted with our Blood, when we walk'd in the shadow of Death, were utter Strangers from the Life of God, he had compassion for us, he loved us as Vessels fore-ordain'd for Glory, and Heirs of the Grace of Life.

Experience also subscribes to this, that God only quickens the *dead in Trespasses and Sins*; for if you ask from the beginning, you will find all that ever were converted from their Evil-courses, ascribing their Conversion and quickning to newness of Life, unto God, and to his Grace. And to this end was that Prayer, *Jer. 31. 18. Turn thou me and I shall be turned, for thou art the Lord my God.* None but the Lord can turn a Sinner.

1. Let us enquire of Nature and Art, if they can befriend us in this matter, and we shall find but small comfort thence, good Education, ingenious Conversation, diligent Reading, and careful Imitation, may lick us somewhat fair, and put us into some tolerable form ; but all these, and whatever else human strength can furnish us withal, shall never change our Hearts, make us Christians indeed, or teach us to live the life of Grace.

I must confess, some glimmerings of Light still remain in the Soul, and the Law that God wrote on Man's Heart is not so totally obliterated, but that he can thereby discover some part of what he is to do or omit, and this is sufficient to instruct Mankind in the Duties of Morality, otherwise I see no probability of preserving humane Society in those parts of the Universe where the Gospel hath not obtain'd ; but yet I may safely averr, this light is too weak to lead us out of every wicked way, or indeed to work in us that abhorrence of any, which becomes him who is raised to newness of Life. And this is evident from the Apostle's Reasoning with the *Romans*, Rom. 6. 21. *What fruit had you in those things of which you are now ashamed ?*

shamed? All your natural and acquired Light did never, nor ever could so convince you of the filthiness, unreasonableness, and danger of Sin, as the Gospel and Grace of Christ hath done; for you now blush at what before you acted and defended, nay rejoyc'd and boasted in.

Whoever by natural Light attain'd a true estimate of Sin? few upon that account have been brought to think so hardly of profitable or pleasurable Wickedness as they deserv'd; and while we are under the tutoring of Nature, it is no hard matter to perswade us, that God can be so angry as to forget his Mercy, and thence Sin draws great encouragement.

We might enlarge and show the fondness of Nature, how ready it is to justifie, excuse, or extenuate the worst of Doings; and where once Sin and Wickedness have taken deep root, how impatient are such Persons of Reproof? they will rack their Wits in evading, or else flat contradicting the most convincing Arguments, and this you may collect from what our Lord hath taught, *Job. 3. 20. Every one that doth Evil hates the Light, neither cometh he to the Light, lest his Deeds should be reproved.* This then being a true report, it is in vain to rely on our natural Powers, to convince us of our sinful and wretched State.

2. If we repair to our Consciences, and hope for assistance from them we shall be miserably deluded.

Conscience, which is a faculty in the Soul of Man, taking notice of all his Actions, Words, and Thoughts, was set up as the Candle of the Lord; and without all peradventure in its native purity was capable to discharge its Office, in directing us both to the performing of our Duty, and abstaining from all things unlawful and prohibited, it did commend and condemn proportionably to Man's Behaviour; but this also suffer'd in the fall of Man, so that it is grown weak in discerning and reproofing: And unless it be illuminated again by the Grace of God, they that follow it, follow but a blind Guide; moreover, the greater strength any Sin gains by custom, the less

less feeling thereof is found in the Conscience, so that either it gives us a false Judgment, through the ignorance that is in it, or else none, by reason of the stupefaction and numbness gradually brought upon it; and to that pass some have brought theirs, that it is but rare they perceive wherein they have any.

Besides, the Conscience is many times partial, and very often speaks Peace, whereas there is no real ground for it; through Custom it is become a Party with Sin; and Satan that ruleth in the Hearts of the Disobedient, has such variety of Colours, whereby to palliate his Temptations, that the worst of doing meet with so favourable an Interpretation, as crooked things are received for strait, and Vice for Virtue; and to enlarge no farther, Reason is so far in combination with the Father of Sin, that it shows it self in nothing more than in framing Excuses, and mincing of what a seeing Conscience cannot but condemn; so that it is not visible how a natural Conscience should so convince a Sinner as to urge his Conversion.

But though neither Nature, our Parts, our Learning, or other Acquisitions, nor yet our Consciences can quicken us when *dead in Trespasses and Sins*, yet God can; he who by his word produced Light out of Darkness, can, by the shining of his Grace, infuse Light into our Understandings, can raise us out of our Lethargy and Deadness, and quicken us to newness of Life.

3. The next Inquiry is after what manner God does quicken the *dead in Trespasses and Sins*.

I take not upon me to shew, every way that God takes in breathing into the Souls of Sinners the supernatural Life of Grace; for when our Saviour was pleas'd to compare the Holy Spirit (the chief Agent in this work) to the Wind, Job. 3. 8 he minded us of our Ignorance, saying, That it blew where it listeth, and that none of us knew whence it cometh, or whether it goeth, notwithstanding we hear the sound thereof thereby intimating, that the Spirit of God moves according to

to his own Pleasure, and that we understand not all his Secret Operations.

The greater part of the Few who are effectually called, were they demanded the precise time that the Holy Spirit was sent from God to speak unto them ; or the way and manner he infused into them his Quickning Grace, would find it as difficult to answer as to solve. *Solomon's Riddle to the Anatomist, Eccles. 11. 5.* to describe the way of the Spirit ; or how the Bones do grow in the Womb of her that is with Child ; how the Body of Man is formed, or when the reasonable Soul is infused into it. These things are too high for Man's Understanding ; and though he should live long, he must let them alone for ever : And the Reason *David* hath given us, *Psalm 139. 14, 15.* Man is wonderfully and curiously made in secret ; none but the Eye of God was privy to this great Work : The New Creation exceeding the first, no wonder it is so conceal'd and mysterious. However, though some are as much in the dark (a to the time and manner of their Conversion, Regeneration, and Quickning) as the blind Man was how his Eyes were opened, and are satisfied when they can say in his Words, with the same Truth, *Whereas they were blind, they now see ; whereas they wandred in Darkness, they now walk in the Light ; whereas when the Prince of Darkness ruled in their Hearts, all things were in Confusion, neither was God feared, Man regarded, or their own Souls pitied ; now, blessed be God, all is set to rights.* Yet there are others, whose Quickning has been more sensible and apparent as to these Particulars ; and it stands upon Record how God has quickned such when dead in Trespasses and Sins.

The Means whereby the great Work of renewing and converting a Sinner is brought about are various. Some have been called by the Word of God inviting them to Faith and Repentance ; and this is generally by Preaching : And therefore by way of prevention Satan laboureth to bring this Ordinance out of esteem. This Calling proves effectual when the Spirit

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annexes his Power thereto, and sets the Word so powerfully upon the Heart, that the Hearer is persuaded and brought to Obedience. The Scripture is plentiful in Instances of this nature.

Again, others God is pleased to quicken by his extraordinary Providences whether of Mercy or Judgment.

David was converted by a Series of Afflictions; Simon Peter by a miraculous Draught of Fish; and many at Christ's raising of the Dead. Very small Means have sometimes been effectual to the recalling of Sinners: For if the Spirit of God is pleased to co-operate, nothing can be so mean as to want its desired effect. Thus we have heard how that Sentence of St. Augustin, *He that hath promised Pardon to the Penitent, hath not promised Repentance to the presumptuous Sinner*, being wrote by a Diamond in a Paine of Glass, and accidentally read by an inveterate Sinner, made a deeper Impression on his Heart than what the Diamond had made on the Glass, and raised the Reader to Life again.

Such an accident also made way for the Conversion of that great Man before-mention'd: *Tolle lege*, Take up and read, was the Call he heard: the strange Providence was the opening the Book at that place! *Not in Gluttony and Drunkenness, not in Chambering and Wantonness*, Rom. 13. 13.

What eminent Converts have Sicknes and Affliction made? And hereby we may perceive the infinite Wisdom of God, that whereas these naturally estrange us from God, yet by the workings of his Grace, they sometimes bring the Sufferer nearer to him. This was the present Case which occasion'd this Discourse. Whilst Health and Ease continued, neither God nor any manner of Goodness found room in this Man's Heart. All his Care was to straggle farther: But when, as he conceived, the Portion allotted him was totally consumed, Time and Strength at once coming to a Period, then was the Season that God chose to bring him to himself. Thus did this great Physician extract a Treacle out of the Viper, and made her the Apprehensions of Death the Means of his Quickning.

and by the Gates of Hell, to lead him to the Kingdom of Heaven.

But I must not forbear to tell you again, though God hath hitherto, and can yet convert Sinners, raise the Dead in Trespasses and Sins by divers ways, yet his more common way is by the preaching of his Word, which (as much Foolishness as the World accounts it) is called, *The Power of God unto Salvation*, Cor. i. 18. And it may be taken for granted, that though God may call Men other ways, he rarely or never calls them at that slight, despise, and reject this ; and consequently such Persons that either in their Hearts contemn, or in their Words reproach this Ordinance of God, have not that assurance of their Calling and Conversion, as they fondly persuade themselves.

But this we may take for a standing Rule, that whatever be the Means, or whensoever the time of God's Quickning and Converting Sinners, the Holy Spirit is evermore the Principal Agent, nothing is or can be done in this case without him ; nay, without the exceeding greatness of his Power, as our Apostle expresses it, Eph. i. 18. no humane Power that rightly understood it self, ever yet attempted to raise the Dead ; such as have been sick and languishing have been holpen by Herbs ; the sleeping and slumbering have been awaken'd by Noise ; but habitual Sinners, Persons for a long time accustomed to do Evil, and that with great Resolution and Impudence, cannot so properly be said to sleep, or to be sick, as to be Stone-dead, they are buried in the grave of Sin ; and if ever raised thence and quicken'd, the same Divine Power that created them at first must Act herein.

That we may the more admire the Goodness and Mercy of God who takes such notice of, and shews such pity to Sinners, Sinners of the highest Rank, most inveterate, most rebellious, as to send his Holy Spirit to convert and quicken them, we will a little consider the difficulty of this work, and that by comparing it with the work of Creation : Moses gives

gives an account of the Creation, that the great difficulty of producing things in this beauty and excellency, in which we behold them, was, they were to be formed out of a Chaos, Confusion, where was no disposition to Form or Comeliness but in renovating a Sinner, there is not only an indisposition but an opposition also found; and for this reason is the Spirit in this great work said to strive with Man, and Sinners to resist him.

I shall now proceed to acquaint you with some Operation of the Spirit, in quickning those who are *dead in Trespass and Sins.*

1. He convinces the Mind and Conscience, and illuminate the Understanding: and thus we find the Apostle intending the Conversion of the *Ephesians*, pray'd, *Ephes. 1. 18.* that the Eyes of their Understanding might be enlighten'd.

The Spirit of God convinces the wicked of their sinful estate he brings them to apprehend the nature of Sin, and the wickedness of their Lives; it is by his Light that the Law imprinted on the Heart of Man becomes legible; and that Candle of the Lord in Man's Breast, which pleasure and custom in Sin had dimm'd, he snuffs; so that the Sinner is fitted to read, as we as the Law to be read, the Understanding being clear'd and elevated, and then we come to see what manner of Persons we are; for the greater the Sinner is in his wickedness, the surer witness the Mirth, nay Madnes of such; but when once this Spirit shall visit them, and bring the Law of God fresh to Mind, and excite and assist their Consciences to try the behaviour of the Sinner according to the Law of God, he dies, his Heart grows cold in the midst of his Body, and an horrible dread overwhelms him. This St. Paul delivers experienced in his own case, *Rom. 7. 1.* *Without the Law I was alive, but when the commandment came sin revived and I died:* while I kept the Law of God behind my back I was at rest, but when the Spirit of Grace brought fresh to my Conscience, and gave me a right understanding as well as a fair remembrance of it, then I died; I conclude

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my self lost and dead ; and so much did this advance his Conversion, that as he beheld his Misery so he desired to be delivered from it v. 24. *O wretched Man, who shall deliver me.*

When the *Scribes* and *Pharises* treated so Subtly and zealously with our Saviour, about the Condemnation of the Woman reprehended in Adultery ; we may observe our Lord Job. 8. 6. reminded them of the Law of God, and gave Commission to such as were without fault to Stone her, they which heard this (the Spirit working together with the Word) v. 9. were convicted by their own Consciences and shrank away, so far before were they from acquaintance with themselves or judging their own evil doings, that they were all for inveighing against others, but when the Law was laid before them, their Consciences immediately Arraign'd, Cast and Condemn'd themselves.

Did not the Spirit aid the Conscience, there would be no conviction either by Law or Gospel, for Mens extravagant Love for their Sins would either overaw, or corrupt the judgment of their Consciences ; but herein the power of the Spirit is seen that upon hearing Gods word, or minding attentively the works of Providence towards us, our Sins are straight set in order before our Eyes, as *David* observes, or we possess the Sins of our Youth in the words of *Job*, or else as it happened to the *Samaritan* Woman when the Spirit apply'd the words of Christ to her Heart, all that ever we have done appears fresh to our Consciences.

Thus fared it with him of whom I have been speaking, it pleased him in whose Hands Life and Death, Health and Sickness are, to suffer a sudden and violent Sickness to overtake him. In his Sickness he apprehended Death. Then did the Spirit of grace awake and revive some notions of a future Judgment, which this Person had formerly heard of, but forgot and thrown aside, and these being at this instant closely press'd upon his Conscience convinced him of his wretched State, and drew from him that Confession and Prayer, *Lord*

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(30)

have mercy on me, Lord have mercy on my poor Soul, for I am not fit to Dy : And thus the sense of his evil doings, and the wrath justly due thereto being by this meanes renewed in his Conscience, it tended to his Conviction and Conversion ; now he saw his Sins with other Eyes than formerly what he once accounted pleasant is now become bitter, in his Health Sin seemed a sweet Morsel, to fulfil the most loathsom Lusts of the Flesh was more grateful than his dayly Bread, but now he finds the defilement thereof, and apprehends the Vengeance that will reward such beastly doings; in his Health and Strength as saith the word of God, he drank in Iniquity like Water but now he is Arrested by Sickness, and fears to be laid up in the Prison of the Grave it is become a Terrour, Trembling and Astonishment to him :

I the more willingly attribute this operation on the Conscience of this young Man to the Spirit of Grace, than to natural fear, melancholy or to the evil Spirit as some do, and that for this reason because, his evil and danger though most lively set before him, transported him not to despair, which is the usual effect of the formention'd Disease and constant design of our spiritual Adversary, but he that show'd him his Sin and Misery show'd him also his Remedy, viz. the mercy of God, and now incited him to cry and begg for it that being thereby Reprived he might amend.

Where Satan has leave to awaken the Consciences of Men his method generaly is, to show them the Wounds made in their Consciences but to hide from them the balme that is provided to heal them ; he will write our Sins in capital Letters, but it is not to provoak a speedier or greater Repentance, but to persuade us that for them there can be no mercy ; and that there is no other remedy for our terror but to become our own Executioners. But here blessed be God it was otherwise, the whole Rowl of his Sins was discover'd, but withal he was directed and assisted to begg mercy and to promise Reformation.

2. By quickning the will and inclining it to God and its duty.

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Humane Wisdom ; Arguments and Exhortations cannot change the natural corrupt will of Man : The Rhetorician may attempt an habitual wicked Man, one under the continual dominion of Satan, with arguments of the best form and figure of the strongest Sense and Reason, and so most probable to perwade, but notwithstanding, the Will of him that is thus discours'd may either receive or reject, shew its self complaisant or refractory, according as it pleases : For though, as I have observed the Spirit in converting a Sinner does clear, set right, and elevate the Understanding, yet are we not to suppose that thence forward the Will is wrought upon, moved, and perswaded by the Power of the Understanding so rectified; should we so judge, we should derogate from the Power and Goodness of the holy Spirit. We ought therefore to know that there is a farther Operation of the Spirit of Grace which relates to the Will, which he changes and inclines, or otherwise Conversion would not follow upon Conviction ; for every one that is Convicted is not Converted ; all who are sensible of their Sins do not, nay will not forsake them ; so that the great work of quickning a Sinner is the changing and altering his Will, the turning and new setting his Biass and Inclinations.

Admit the Conscience of Man holds forth a true and clear Light, yet it is not always a safe Conclusion that the Will shall follow the Direction thereof, *Heathens* have taught us better, *Video meliora proboq; deteriora sequor*, said she in the Poet, I see as plain as need be what is fit to doe, and I hold it convenient to be done, nevertheless I follow the Inclinations of my Will drawing me another way.

This *David* intimates in his Prophecy of the Gospel Times, 110 Ps. 3. v. *Thy People shall be willing in the Day of thy Power*, so powerfully should the Spirit work in the Hearts of the Elect as to melt their Hardness. Overcome their Stubborness and prevaile over their Perverseness Their Wills should be wrought upon.

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And thus wrought the Spirit of God upon this Man we have been speaking of, he had by sundry Persons been divers times entreated, advised, and exhorted to Repentance, yet none of those ways or meanes wrought upon him, but left him as they found him Resolute and Desperate, but now the same God that turnd his Health to Sickness turn'd his Mind also; as may be perceived by his earnest desire and Prayer for Mercy and that upon Gods terms, namely Repentance and Reformation.

The World affords too many who are Conceited, that they have a certain power over their Wills, so that though at this or that call; upon this or that Visitation they do not convert and return to God, nor separate from their Sins and sinful Companions, they make no doubt they will and shall hereafter: such Persons by all this do but declare their Ignorance of themselves, for if they can will their Conversion hereafter what hinders they doe not will it now (when it will be less difficult and more acceptable) if the pleasures of Sin and Sinful Company are so Charming now, that they are unwilling to be Divorced from them. Why may they not appear more Charming hereafter when frequent Enjoyment shall have contracted not only a loving Acquaintance with, but a passionate Fondness for them? If they think it not worth while to Repent and Reform now, to obtain the favour of God, and their Pardon and Salvation, upon what grounds do they believe their Wills will incline to these Works hereafter, when the number of their Sins shall be encreas'd, the Wrath of God more incensed, their time much less, and the Adversary of their Soul the more diligent?

How knowest thou Oh Man that the Divine goodness will favour thee by such a violent terrifying Sickness as this Person had or that the Spirit of God will improve such a Visitation to the awakning of thy Conscience? art thou sure that upon such conviction and check he shall not resist, refuse, deny, delay and put off; but be willing, obedient and conformable?

Every one that has been Sick has not throughly been induc'd

to call his ways to Remembrance; b^e every awakned Conscience
hatli not been attended with a complying will, but though they
have seen such occasion to Repent, yet they have had no Inclination to it. From what hⁱ is been already spoken we infer.

I How great thanks and praise do all that have been called, awakened, and quickned owe to God for his unspeakable Goodness?

We live in a constant dependance upon the favour of the Almighty, it is his goodness that we Live and Breath, that the Clouds did lately distil their Moisture, and the Sun yet continues his Heat to ripen the Finites of the Earth for our Use, the dayly providence of God declares that Man is the darling of Heaven. The deliverances and blessings wrought for and sent unto us. All the comforts and accommodation of our Life, Preach thankfulness unto us, and we do ill re-quite the Lord if we found not forth his Praises; but ought we to praise him for temporal, then surely much more for Spiritual mercys? Shall we bless him for our Food, than more especially for his Word? is it fit we magnify him, that he blesses us in our Worldly Business, much more that he so blesses us as to turn us from our Sins? Shall we magnify him if our Riches increase, and shall we not praise him more cheerfully for the Riches of his Grace? our exaltation to Dignity and Honour we account deserving a full tribute of Praise and Adoration, how does then it become those to be thankful, whose Feet he hath pulled out of the Mire of Sin; whose Hearts he has sanctify'd with his Grace, and thereby fitted them for Glory? yet to that height of Wickednes are some arrived that they would be more thankful to be Rest at Liberty in their Sins than to be awakened. To be left Dead in their evil courses than by the Grace of God to be quickened to newness of Life.

Though we are apt to bless our selves upon the receipt of temporal favours, yet the World wants not presidents how miserable to me have been that have abounded most with them, but he that is effectually called of God, whose Mind is enlightened so that he Repents, whose Heart and Will is chang'd so that he amends and lives to the Glory of God is so happy, that all good things are his, now God is become his reconciled Father, the Prince of Peace is his Brother, And such gels are his Attendants and his Friends, and the Heavenly Paradise his Inheritance.

Now hat the glorious Creator of Heaven and Earth who is ever attended with Myriads of Angels ready, able; and Gloriying to do his blessed

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blessed Will, should condescend to send his holy Spirit to Woe and Sollicit, Persuade and strive with sinful Dust and Ashes to return to him, that they may pertake of his Favour and glory, as it demonstrates his infinite Love and condescension, so it calls aloud for our most thankful Love and Obedience.

Farther that I may excite a true Spirit of thankfulness in all Gods converted ones, let me desire such to consider, Gods particuiar and special Goodness to them selves, for it is evident God has not visited all in the same manner that he hath visited you : and yet what were you better than they ? how many hath God passed by, when he called you ? how many are left in their Ignorance, nay lock'd up in the hardness of Heart to the day of Judgment, yet you are Enlightened, Softned, Awakned and Quickned :

Oh ! Praise the Lord for his Goodness, make his Name Glorious, Proclaim the Praises of his Grace, and tell out with Gladness what he has done for your Souls. You were by Nature dead in Trespasses and Sins, you had no power to raise or quicken your selves. But God has plukt the Scales from your Eyes ; has freed you Feet from the depth of Sin and Ignorance, he hath call'd you out of Darkness, horrid Darkness, hellish Darkness, into his most marvellous Light : To the Light and under standing of his Word and Will, to the Light of his Grace and Favour, that you may be fitted for the Light of his Glory. Tell out therefore these his works of Mercy to you with Gladness, David in his 114. Ps. 7 8 praised God Heartily *For turning the hard Rock into a standing Water,* the Converted are to praise God for converting their Hearts by nature, custome and evil Habits made harder than any Rocks, therefore let them give the Lord the Praise due unto his Name.

2. Is God able and hath he lately Wakened some notorious Sinners as this requires of them Thanks and Praise, and of all Christians to magnify Gods Mercy to them, so it serves to Admonish all that are yet in an unconverted Estate, not to prove refractory any farther, but being called to make hast to turn unto the Lord.

My Hearts desire is to improve this late Providence to the honour of God, and I judge this one way to persuade Sinners every where, that they would take notice of Gods doings, and warnings more exactly Oh ! defer not this great and necessary Work, which if you Die before done, you will certainly rise for ever undone. Harden not your Hearts, shut not your Eyes willfully, stop not, nor turn away your Ears artificially, resist not the Spirit of Grace, but when ever he knockes

knocks at the Door of your Hearts whether by the word of God, or by the works of God, make haste and Open unto him :

Let none presume saying in their Hearts they will stay till they have such a like calling as this Person had, consider this is not granted to all, which way soever therefore God shall call, be willing and prepar'd to heare and obey : He aggravates his Guilt and Punishment, who despises the motions of Grace, and yet such Enemys ate some to their own Conversion, that if the Spirit by their Consciences smite hem rather than they will submit, yield and turn, they hant out for Business. For Pleasure, for Mirth and Musick, for Company and Drink, that by these meanes they may drown and put to silence these Monitors. And if God calls them by his word they will cast that behind their Back, or else vainly falsly and partialy Interpret it; and if by his Ministers, they shall have no Oyl for their Lamps, no Respect paid to their Persons, nor Justice done their Reputations; if by Friends, they shall have hatred for their good Will, and if by his Providence. How doe many either not regard, or else discredit them; the present Act of Providence some would elude pretending there is no such thing, others would discredit it by exclaiming against the meanness of the Persons. Such forget, or else beleive not that Christ call'd for his Disciples poor Fishermen, and other of lower degree, and why should it seem strange or ridiculous that God should call one from a heap of Raggs seeing he has formerly taken others from the Dung-pile. He ever had respect to the Lowly, the things of this World commend us not to God, neither has he any respect of Persons, and this no more than what the Son of God hath foretold us that the Poor have the Gospel Preach'd unto them.

Let therefore this Providence be improv'd, and give me leave to say this Person who was lately dead in Trespasses and Sins, but is now quickned by the grace of God Preacheth unto you, you should no longer continue in your corrupt wicked State. But while God holds the Sceptre of Mercy, come in that you may be saved; God is patient but he is also strong and if the Sinner will presist in his Wickedness, his Arme will one Day Destroy him; God is Gracious and waiteth to show himself so; but yet if we despise his Grace, we shall provoak and feel his VVrath. He is Merciful but if we will not be persuadet to come unto him, his Justice will revenge abused Mercy.

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Knowing the Prophaness and Atheisme of the Age: I thus advise, for it may be expected that their former unconverted Companions will seek all opportunitys of perverting these again. Their Master whom they serve, being leath that any should escape his Hand; will give them this Task, and besides this, we have such as will make a mock and Scoff, a taunt, a proverb, a Tavern or an Ale-house Jest at the reformation of these Persons, least therefore through frequent Temptations, or publick Derision they fall off from their present Religious Profession; let our Zeal to the glory of God and our Christian Religion, and our Charity to their Souls make us mindful to beseech God to Strengthen and Stablish them by the power of his Grace, that they having laid their Hands to the Plough may not look back.

It is fit that Prayers be put up by all that Love the Glory of God and the Gospel of his Son, that as God has called these to the knowledge of himself, so he would Build them up in that knowledge, and cause his Grace to abound in them, that they may become burning and shining Lights to the World, that as they are called from the power of Satan (that Prince of Darkness, who held them many Years in Subjection) and translated into the Kingdom of Jesus Christ, so they may be upheld and Established therein, Oh! Pray we that these may adore the Gospel which they now profess. That they may not be found to have received this great Grace in Vain, but that they stand fast and neither return with the Dog to his Vomit, nor with the Sow to her wallowing in the Mire.

Let us also devoutly Pray that our Heavenly Father would blethe the meanes of Grace amon2 us, that many more of the Children of Disobedience may be turned out of their crooked and perverse Way and brought into the Fold of Christ; even so, Oh! God let it be the glory of thy grace, for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.

F I N I S.

Reader the Proverb is true, Hast makes Waste; through too great Expedition, thou w^t meet these Escapes, in the Sermons; which the Printer prays thee to Corrett. P. 1. 16. reali whom for how. p. 4. l. 21. dele a. p. 7. l. 7. for and read for. p. 8. 27 him for them. p. 17. for p. 9. l. 1. read retains. p. 19. l. 12. read all good thing. p. 20. l. 6. dele fourthly, &c. l. 34. read withdrawing. p. 27. l. 1. read led. 28. l. 25. read lich and one. l. 26. read him. l. 27. his Conscience of the re of this.

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